

The following are highlights taken from the E.D. Tabs "Public Libraries in the United States: Fiscal Year 2000" released in July 2002

Number of Public Libraries and Population of Legal Service Area

- There were 9,074 public libraries (administrative entities) in the 50 states and the District of Columbia in fiscal year (FY) 2000 (table 1).¹
- Ninety-seven percent² of the total population of the states and the District of Columbia were served by public libraries, either in legally established geographic service areas or in areas under contract.
- Eleven percent of the public libraries served 71 percent of the population of legally served areas in the United States; each of these public libraries had a legal service area population of 50,000 or more (tables 1A and 1B).³

Service Outlets

- Eighty-one percent of public libraries had one single direct service outlet (an outlet that provides service directly to the public) (table 23). Nineteen percent had more than one direct service outlet. Types of direct service outlets include central library outlets, branch library outlets, and bookmobile outlets.
- A total of 1,501 public libraries (17 percent) had one or more branch library outlets, with a total of 7,383 branch outlets (table 2). The total number of central library outlets was 8,915. The total number of stationary outlets (central library outlets and branch library outlets) was 16,298. Eight percent of public libraries had one or more bookmobile outlets, with a total of 884 bookmobiles.

Legal Basis

- Fifty-five percent of public libraries were part of a municipal government, 11 percent were part of a county/parish, 10 percent were nonprofit association libraries or agency libraries, 9 percent were separate government units known as library districts, 5 percent had multijurisdictional legal basis under an intergovernmental agreement, 3 percent were part of a school district, and 1 percent were part of a city/county (table 21). Six percent reported their legal basis as "other."

Operating Income and Expenditures

Operating Income

- Seventy-seven percent of public libraries' total operating income of about \$7.7 billion came from local sources, 13 percent from state sources, 1 percent from federal sources, and 9 percent from other sources such as monetary gifts and donations, interest, library fines, and fees (table 12).

¹See the glossary in appendix A for definitions of the terms used in this report.

²This percentage was derived by dividing the total unduplicated population of legal service areas in the United States (table 1) by the sum of the official state total population estimates as reported by the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Also see *Public-Use Data File: Public Libraries Survey, Fiscal Year 2000* (NCES 2002-341), forthcoming on the NCES Web Site.

³The percentages were derived from tables 1A and 1B. The sum of the five columns on table 1A where the population of the legal service area is 50,000 or more is 11.1 percent. The sum of the five columns on table 1B where the population of the legal service area is 50,000 or more is 71.4 percent. (Calculations are based on unrounded data.)

- Nationwide, the average total per capita⁴ operating income for public libraries was \$28.96 (table 13). Of that, \$22.31 was from local sources, \$3.70 from state sources, \$.21 from federal sources, and \$2.73 from other sources.
- Per capita operating income from local sources was under \$3.00 for 9 percent of public libraries, \$3.00 to \$14.99 for 39 percent of libraries, \$15.00 to \$29.99 for 32 percent of libraries, and \$30.00 or more for 20 percent of libraries (table 14).

Operating Expenditures

- Total operating expenditures for public libraries were \$7 billion in FY 2000 (table 15). Of this, 64 percent was expended for paid staff and 15 percent for the library collection.
- Thirty-two percent of public libraries had operating expenditures of less than \$50,000, 41 percent expended \$50,000 to \$399,999, and 27 percent expended \$400,000 or more (table 18).
- Nationwide, the average per capita operating expenditure for public libraries was \$26.42 (table 16). The highest average per capita operating expenditure was \$47.40, and the lowest was \$12.08.
- Expenditures for library collection materials in electronic format⁵ were 1 percent of total operating expenditures for public libraries (table 17). Expenditures for electronic access⁶ were 3 percent of total operating expenditures.

Staff

- Public libraries had a total of 130,102 paid full-time-equivalent (FTE) staff in FY 2000, or 12.23 paid FTE staff per 25,000 population (tables 10 and C5). Of these, 23 percent, or 2.78 per 25,000 population, were librarians with the ALA-MLS;⁷ 10 percent were librarians by title but did not have the ALA-MLS; and 67 percent were in other positions (tables 10 and C6).
- Forty-four percent of all public libraries, or 4,034 libraries, had librarians with the ALA-MLS (table 10).

⁴Per capita figures are based on the total unduplicated population of legal service areas (which excludes populations of unserved areas) in the 50 states and the District of Columbia, not on the state total population estimates.

⁵Operating expenditures for library materials in electronic format are defined as operating expenditures for materials considered part of the collection, whether purchased or leased, such as CD-ROMs, magnetic tapes, and magnetic disks that are designed to be processed by a computer or similar machine. Examples are U.S. Census data tapes, locally-mounted databases, serials, and reference tools. Included are operating expenditures for equipment when the cost is inseparably bundled into the price of the information service product. Excluded are operating expenditures for library system software and microcomputer software used only by the library staff.

⁶Operating expenditures for electronic access are defined as operating expenditures from the library budget associated with access to electronic materials and services. Included are expenditures for the following: computer hardware and software used to support library operations, whether purchased or leased; mainframes and microcomputers; maintenance; and equipment used to run information service products when those expenditures can be separated from the price of the product. Expenditures for services provided by national, regional, and local bibliographic utilities, networks, consortia, and commercial services are reported, as well as all fees and usage costs associated with such services as Online Computer Library Center (OCLC), FirstSearch, or electronic document delivery.

⁷Librarians with master's degrees from programs of library and information studies accredited by the American Library Association.

Collections

- Nationwide, public libraries had 761 million books and serial volumes in their collections, or 2.9 volumes per capita (table 8). By state, the number of volumes per capita ranged from 1.8 to 5.1.
- Public libraries nationwide had 32 million audio materials and 22 million video materials in their collections (table 8).
- Nationwide, public libraries provided 6.2 materials in electronic format per 1,000 population (e.g., CD-ROMs, magnetic tapes, and magnetic disks) (table 8).

Library Services

Children's Services

- Nationwide, circulation of children's materials was 625 million, or 36 percent of total circulation (tables 4 and 5). Attendance at children's programs was 49 million.

Internet Access and Electronic Services

- Nationwide, 95 percent of public libraries had access to the Internet (table 6). Eighty-nine percent of all public libraries made the Internet available to patrons directly or through a staff intermediary, 4 percent of public libraries made the Internet available to patrons through a staff intermediary only, and 2 percent of public libraries made the Internet available only to library staff.
- Internet terminals available for public use in public libraries nationwide numbered 99,453, or 1.9 per 5,000 population (table 7). The average number of Internet terminals per service outlet⁸ available for public use was 5.8.
- Ninety-nine percent⁹ of the unduplicated population of legal service areas had access to the Internet through their local public library.
- Nationwide, 85 percent of public libraries provided access to electronic services¹⁰ (table 6).

⁸The average was calculated by dividing the total number of Internet terminals available for public use by the total number service outlets (central, branches, and bookmobiles). (See table 2 for outlets data.)

⁹This percentage was derived by summing the unduplicated population of legal service areas for (1) all public libraries in which the Internet was used by patrons through a staff intermediary only and (2) all public libraries in which the Internet was used by patrons either directly or through a staff intermediary, and then dividing the total by the unduplicated population of legal service areas in the United States (table 1). Also see *Public-Use Data File: Public Libraries Survey, Fiscal Year 2000* (NCES 2002-341), forthcoming on the NCES Web Site.

¹⁰Access to electronic services refers to electronic services (e.g., bibliographic and full-text databases, multimedia products) provided by the library due to subscription, lease, license, consortial membership or agreement. It includes full-text serial subscriptions and electronic databases received by the library or an organization associated with the library.

Other Services

- Total nationwide circulation of public library materials was 1.7 billion, or 6.4 materials circulated per capita (table 4). The highest circulation per capita was 12.8, and the lowest was 1.9.
- Nationwide, 16 million library materials were loaned by public libraries to other libraries (table 4).
- Nationwide, reference transactions in public libraries totaled 291 million, or 1.1 reference transactions per capita (table 4).
- Nationwide, library visits in public libraries totaled 1.1 billion, or 4.3 library visits per capita (table 4).